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AARDVARK-VANAHEIM PRESENTS

CEREBUS

39
JUN

$1.50

Photo by William C. Johnson

A Note from the Publisher

This month I'm just going to name a few items that I feel might be of interest to you.

One important item is that Barry Windsor-Smith will not be doing the cover to Swords of Cerebus Volume IV. A few things have come up and so Barry has been forced to post-pone it to a later date. Dave has painted a cover for that issue and we will try to catch Barry at a better time for another issue.

The F.O.O.G. Portfolio (Friends of Ol' Gerber), to benefit Steve Gerber in his legal battle with Marvel is due to be released just before this issue goes out. Logic dictates that as you read this, it should be available to you. I urge you to check this out, as the artists who worked on it all did a really fine job.

The reprint of Swords of Cerebus Volume I will be shipping out at the same time as F.O.O.G., so it too should be available as you read this. Dave has drawn a new cover for it and added an introduction to the story he did with Marshall Rogers, "Diamondback".

I will also be moving into a new office in July. The main reason for the move is that I need the space!! My original office seemed impossible to fill just five months ago, when I moved into it. Now it has gotten so cramped that I can hardly move. I also want to start making Cerebus T-shirts, and that takes a bit of space. I sure hope that this time the office won't fill up as quickly.

My last item concerns buttons. We have authorized Rick Crowe at The Comic Book Shop in Nottingham, England to begin production of Cerebus buttons. They are proposing to make five different buttons, two of them Cerebus and the other three from other characters in the book. (Probably Elrod and the Moon Roach for beginners if the samples they sent are any indication). As we get more definite information concerning this, I will pass it on to you. Let me point out that these folks went to the trouble of getting our permission to do this, and are paying Dave royalties in advance. I wish there were more people who did business this way.

On the subject of our new artist in Unique Stories, I wish that I could give you some background on Bob Conway, but the truth is I know very little about him. But I am really happy that I have finally been able to place his story in Unique. My only regret is that it took me so many months to organize myself to the point where I knew what was going in and could schedule it.

That's about it for this issue. See you all next month!!

Deni

CEREBUS

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THE NEXT PRIME MINISTER OF ISST, COMPORTING HIMSELF LIKE A COMMON THUG IN SOME SQUALID TAVERN...
HONESTLY!
IF I HADN'T SENT SOMEONE TO GET YOU, I CAN JUST IMAGINE WHAT PEOPLE WOULD BE SAYING...
HURRY UP!
WE'RE LATE!
GOOD MORNING, ASTORIA.
MR. BLAKELY!
PETUNIACON
AND THE CANDIDATE HIMSELF...
HOW FORTUITOUS.
WE HAVE SO MUCH TO DISCUSS.
DAY THREE

BUT, HE'S SUPPOSED TO...
I SHOULDN'T THINK IT NECESSARY TO REMIND YOU, ASTORIA, THAT I COULD ALWAYS RUN FOR PRIME MINISTER, MYSELF...
BUT...
BUT...
NOW, BE A GOOD GIRL AND RUN ALONG...
AH! THE AMBASSADOR SUITE...
"THE REGENCY'S FIFTH FLOOR COAL-MINE"
"BE A GOOD GIRL..."
"AND RUN ALONG!?!"
The Ambassador Suite

YOU COULD RUN FOR PRIME MINISTER?
AGAINST CEREBUS?
MM.
AND I WOULD WIN. DECISIVELY.
YOU NEEDN'T WORRY, THOUGH.
EVER SINCE YOU DROPPED THAT STONE SCULPTURE ON THE GRAND INQUISITOR
OUR ENTIRE WAY OF LIFE HAS BEEN CHANGED...
BLACK TOWER DYNASTY. LOVELY PIECE.
I DON'T WANT TO WIN.
I HAVE NO DESIRE TO PRESIDE OVER THE RAPID DECLINE AND FALL OF THE CITY-STATE...
MY LOYALTY IS TO HIS HOLINESS AND THE CHURCH OF TARIM.
THOUGH IT WOULD SEEM THEY ARE GONE FOREVER ...ALL THE HIGH PRIESTS AND CHURCH OFFICIALS SEALED UP IN THE SACRED CATHEDRAL...
EVERY DAY, ANOTHER PROPHECY IS FULFILLED.
OUR LEADERS ARE IN DISREPUTE.
OUR LEGIONS ARE DIMINISHED BY TWO THIRDS.
OUR DEBTS GROW UNCHECKED ...
THE CHURCH DESTROYS ITSELF.
AND IT IS LEFT TO ME TO EITHER BE THE NEXT PRIME MINISTER OR CHOOSE THE NEXT PRIME MINISTER...

WHICH BRINGS US TO YOU... AND WETHER OR NOT YOU ARE SUITABLE FOR THE ...
SORRY TO INTERRUPT.
MIND IF I USE YOUR BATHTUB? MINE STILL HAS A RING AROUND IT FROM THE BLACK SUN PUNCH ELROD MADE IN IT LAST NIGHT
THROUGH THERE...
TARIM'S MERCY! THAT WAS... HE... WAS IT NOT?
LORD JULIUS? AYE.
WHAT ABOUT IT?
YOU WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO HAVE SOAP WOULD YOU?
TOP SHELF.
BUT I THOUGHT... THAT IS ...
WHEN HE ADOPTED ELROD... NOMINATED HIM..
I MEAN, WHY IS HE BEING FRIENDLY?
HE SHOULD CONSIDER YOU AN ENEMY ...
YOU'RE TRYING TO MAKE SENSE... SO FAR AS CEREBUS KNOWS ...
LORD JULIUS HAS NEVER MADE SENSE.

HMMM.
YOU'RE LIVING WITH LORD JULIUS EX-WIFE AND LORD JULIUS COMES IN TO BATHE...
EVEN THOUGH HE AND ASTORIA ARE OSTENSIBLY BITTER ENEMIES
THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.
LIKE CEREBUS SAID...
PERHAPS
HMM
PERHAPS... LORD JULIUS AND ASTORIA ARE NOT THE ENEMIES THEY APPEAR TO BE...
YES.
PERHAPS THEY ARE ALLIES.
LORD JULIUS KNOWS HIS POPULARITY IS DECLINING ...
BECAUSE HE REFUSES TO REDUCE IEST'S INTEREST PAYMENTS...
SO HE HAS ASTORIA PROMOTE YOU BEHIND CLOSED DOORS...
AND EVERYONE VOTES AGAINST LORD JULIUS BY VOTING FOR YOU
I HAVE AN URGENT MESSAGE FOR...
THROUGH THERE...
A CLEVER PLOY, TO BE SURE! ...

I WISH TO FURTHER EMPHASIZE HOW REPREHENSIBLE I FIND THE GROUND-SWELL OF SUPPORT FOR CEREBUS' CANDIDACY AND...
IXNAY ON THE ICTATION-DAY WHILE THE ORON-MAY IS LISTENING-LAY...
TOO LATE!
I'VE HEARD ENOUGH!
YOU CAN FORGET THIS CHARADE OF CRITICISM, LORD JULIUS.
I KNOW NOW, THAT CEREBUS IS YOUR CHOICE FOR PRIME MINISTER...
CHARADE? HOW DARE YOU INFER AND OR IMPLY SUCH A THING?
I WAS SIMPLY ANSWERING THIS LETTER FROM ONE OF CEREBUS' MANY DUPES...
AND YOU JUST HAPPENED TO OVERHEAR!
THAT PAGE, SIR, IS BLANK!
YOU IDIOT! I TOLD YOU TO WRITE A FAKE LETTER...
NOT FAKE WRITING A LETTER...
LORD JULIUS?

I TOLD YOU TO WRITE A...
FORGET IT.
I BARELY GOT IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME...
SO YOU ADMIT THAT THE LETTER IS A FAKE!
THAT MEANS ...
uh...
TAKE YOUR TIME-- IT'LL COME TO YOU...
IT MEANS THAT YOU WERE TRYING TO MAKE ME BELIEVE THAT CEREBUS IS YOUR CHOICE FOR PRIME MINISTER
WHEN IN REALITY...
uh
DON'T LOSE IT, NOW, KID, YOU'RE HALF-WAY HOME.
WHEN IN REALITY HE IS NOT YOUR CHOICE AT ALL!
YOU DON'T WANT HIM TO BE ELECTED...
JUST GOES TO SHOW THAT YOU SHOULDN'T TRY FOOLING SOME-ONE WHO GREW UP IN A MONASTERY IN THE KOTA MOUNTAINS
INDEED IT DOES, MY DEAR LORD JULIUS.

COME ALONG, BASKIN, I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER THAN TO TRY AND RESHAPE A PERFECT SOCIETY.
TAXI!
REMARKABLE.
BUT WHY WOULD ASTORIA CAMPAIGN FOR YOU -- IF SHE AND LORD JULIUS DON'T WANT...
AN ALLIANCE WITH HIS EX-WIFE SO NO ONE WOULD BE SUSPICIOUS AND..
SMASH
PARDON, M'LORD -- DID ANYONE ORDER A TAXI?
WHY, LORD JULIUS DID, BUT HE'S ALREADY..
STAND WHAR YER AT, FANCY BOYS!!
DIRTY FLEAGLE McGREW AN' HIS BABY BROTHER DIRTY DREW HAVE DONE BUSTED OUT!!

OH NO
SEE HERE!
WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS..?
MAH BROTHER AN I ARE RIGHT PEEVED, YER SNOBBISHNESS OVER HIS BEIN' LOCKED UP UNJUSTLY-LIKE.
PER A KID-NAPPIN' WE DIDN'T DO NOTHIN BUT SPECTATE AT. AN' FER WHICH WE EARNED
THE GRAND TOTAL OF ONE DAM BUCK STATCHOO! AN' I, FER ONE.
I'SERVIN' THE REST O MY FORTY-FOUR YEAR NINE-MONTH SIX WEEK-N EIGHT DAY STRETCH.
KNOW WHAT TH S CREATURE IS BABBLING ABOUT?
UH
UH
THE MEMORIES COME FLOODING BACK LIKE A TORRENT OF WHITE WATER. ONCE AGAIN HE SEES THE RED CLAW UNLIL TENEMENT OWNERS GLOATING AS THEY SAW THROUGH HIS PARENTS SEMI DETATCHED DWELLING...
SEES AGAIN, A SMALL BOY VOWING TO HAVE REVENGE! REVENGE! REVENGE!!

THOUGH IT MEANS SACRIFICING HIS CIVILIAN IDENTITY
DIRTY DREW! LOOKY THAR!
HE'S A' TAKIN' HIS SHIRT OFF..!
AN' LOOKIT WHUT HE'S A-W'ARIN UNDERNEATH ...
THE LIGHTNING SWIFT TRANSFORMATION IS MADE AS BLAKE JOCKLEY, TAXI DRIVER, VANISHES...
TO BE REPLACED BY...
NOW HE'S TAKIN HIS PANTS OFF!
HE AIN'T JUST A FANCY BOY..
HE'S A FUNNY BOY..
COVER YER VALUABLES, DIRTY DREW -- HE LOOKS LAK THE MEANEST DAM FUNNY BOY AH EVER SEEN!
GOTCHA, DIRTY FLEAGLE
THE MERELY MAGNIFICENT MOON ROACH!

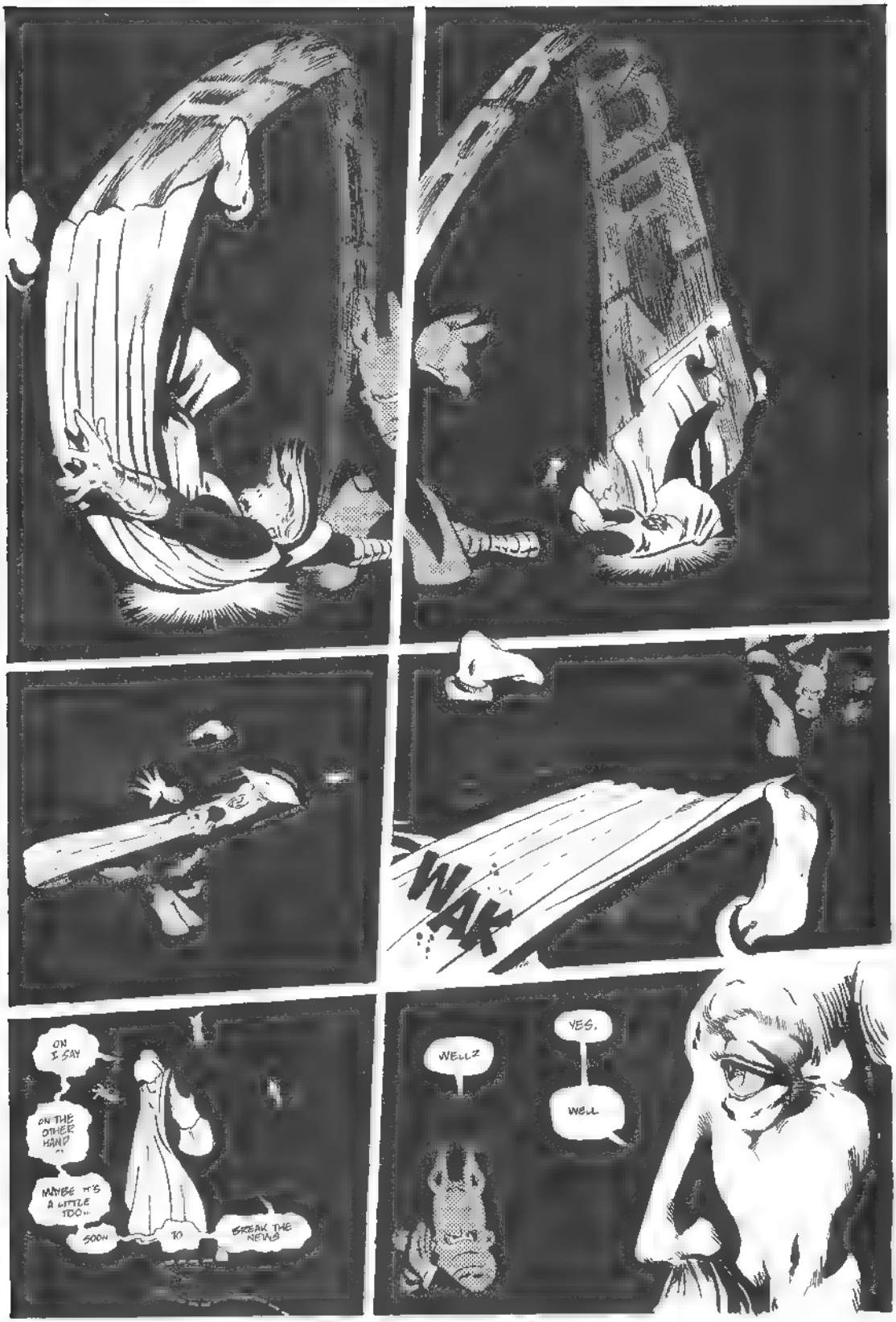
HIT 'IM DIRTY FLEAGLE! HIT 'IM!
HE'S TRYIN' TUH KISS ME!
THEY SEEK TO DISTRACT THE LUNAR AVENGER BY QUESTIONING HIS MASCULINITY... BUT NOTHING CAN DISTRACT HIM FROM HIS ALL-CONSUMING VENGEANCE
SAY YER PRAYERS, FUNNY BOY-- TH'M...
NOT EVEN THE CUTE BLONDE ONE...
SHUT UP, KEVITCH...
INUH!
SORRY, MOON ROACH...
THE ONE WHO LOOKS LIKE A GIANT BUG
AVE CEREBUS WAS JUST A BYSTANDER
HE DROPPED THE SCULPTURE ON THE GRAND INQUISITOR?

HIT 'IM, DIRTY DREW! AH GOT HIS EYES A-COVERED...!
HSSS! THE ONLY EXPLOITERS OF THE POOR FAIL TO RECKON WITH MY REMARKABLE ROACH SENSE...
PING
PING
PING
PING!
BUT IF WHAT YOU SAY IS TRUE THAT THE LARGE INSECT CHAP USED TO BE ASTORIA'S BOY FRIEND AND THAT HE DROPPED THE STONE SCULPTURE ON THE GRAND INQUISITOR...
THEN THE ASTORIA AND LORD JULIUS ALLIANCE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE!
BECAUSE THE GRAND INQUISITOR WAS THE ONE WHO ADVOCATED EXCLUSIVE TRADE WITH PALNU.
LIKE CEREBUS SAID...

THE MOON ROACH STANDS POISED ABOVE THE STILL FORMS OF HIS FALLEN FOES! ONCE MORE, THE TYRANNY OF ECONOMIC ENSLAVEMENT HAS BEEN TOPPLED...
BY THE PURE-BRED STRENGTH AND BRUTE FORCE OF A GOOD SOLID RIGHT TO THE JAW!
"THE WEED OF MONEY BEARS BITTER INTEREST RATES" HE HISSES QUIETLY.
"THE MOON ROACH KNOWS! HSSSSSS!"
YOU'RE QUITE SURE HE IS ASTORIA'S OLD BOYFRIEND?--I MEAN...
HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE HER...TYPE SOMEHOW...
EXCUSE CEREBUS A MINUTE...

BUG!
BUG!!
MAD FINANCIERS! SELLING ORPHANS TO MEET THEIR STOCK MARGINS!!
WHERE?
WHERE?
LOWER FELDA!!
"TO LOWER FELDA" HE CRIES!
LEAPING INTO SPACE, HE SEIZES HIS SILKEN CORD
AND IS ONCE MORE "
WHAM!!
HOTEL SECURITY, M'LORD
THAT PILE OF DIRTY LAUNDRY ON THE CARPET CONTAINS TWO CONVICTED FELONS.
ABRUPTLY THE MOON ROACH REMEMBERS THAT HE HAD ARRIVED IN HIS CIVILIAN IDENTITY AND THAT THERE WAS NO SILKEN CORD OUTSIDE THE WINDOW
SLIPPING INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS HE BARELY MANAGES TO "Mmmm"

And so, after the McGrews have been removed
...
YOU SEE IT'S NOT THAT WE DON'T THINK YOU'RE A GOOD ENOUGH ADMINISTRATOR
OR THAT WE IN ANY WAY DOUBT YOUR CREDENTIALS
BOREALAN, EIGHTH CENTURY
NOZ
NOT AT ALL...
IT'S JUST THAT WE WILL BE FACING MANY... CHALLENGES IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.
WE ARE GOING TO NEED A CHAMPION AS PRIME MINISTER -- A CHAMPION OF THE PEOPLE
A WARRIOR STRONG' SELF-CONFIDENT
DYED BURLAP...
HOW LIKE THE REGENCY
SOMEONE LIKE ELROD.
OR PERHAPS EVEN ELROD HIMSELF.
THERE ARE THOSE WHO SUSPECT THAT THAT IS WHAT LORD JULIUS HAD IN MIND FROM THE VERY...
PARDON-- AH SAY--PARDON ME F'BARGING IN, SON...
BUT LORD JULIUS SUGGESTED I SHOULD COME UP AN' OFFER MY CONDOLENCES...
IT'S--I SAY IT'S OFFICIALLY TIME T'SHAKE HANDS
AHM THE NEW RANKING DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVE


WAK
WELL?
YES.
WELL
OH I SAY
ON THE OTHER HAND
MAYBE IT'S A LITTLE TOO
SOON
TO
BREAK THE NEWS

IT ISN'T JUST STRENGTH AND SELF CONFIDENCE.
THE NEW PRIME MINISTER MUST BE COMPLETELY FREE FROM SCANDAL! COMPLETELY!
THIS MATTER OF "WEE WEEING IN THE SINK"
HMPH! A RIDICULOUS CHARGE NO DOUBT-- ESSENTIALLY A TRIVIAL MATTER, TAKEN AT FACE VALUE.
BUT IT RAISES THE QUESTION "WHAT ELSE MIGHT THIS PERSON KNOW?"
EVEN ASTORIA WAS UNABLE TO DETERMINE THE IDENTITY OF THIS "YOU KNOW WHO"
OH, NO!
THEY MIGHT BE LURKING EVEN NOW WA TING
WHAT GUARANTEE WOULD WE HAVE THAT THIS PERSON WOULDN'T EMERGE AFTER THE ELECTION WITH MORE EMBARRASSING CHARGES?
SHOO!
SHOO!

THEN IT'S OKAY, MR. BLAKELY!
'CAUSE I'M THE ONE WHO WROTE IT -- BUT I DID IT WHEN I WAS MAD AND NOW I'M NOT!!
GAH!
SO YOU CAN SUPPORT CEREBUS!
ELF
AN AARDVARK PRIME MINISTER!! AN AARDVARK PRIME MINISTER!!
YAY! WE HAVEN'T HAD AN AARDVARK PRIME MINISTER SINCE..
SINCE...
HEY!
THAT'S RIGHT!
ELF.
THAT WAS BEFORE THERE WERE PRIME MINISTERS!!
YAHH!
ELF!
HUH?
OH

NO
NO
IT WAS VERY NICE MEETING YOU...
BUT I THINK I HAVE TO BE GOING, NOW
POIT
THAT WAS
HER!
SHE! I MEAN.
THE
REGENCY
POIT
ELF
THE
REGENCY
ELF

WELL--THAT SETTLES IT, THEN, DOESN'T IT?...
YASS.
I MEAN
THE REGENCY ELF!
WHAT A SCANDAL THAT WOULD BE- "THE CANDIDATE CLAIMS TO HAVE ACTUALLY SEEN THE REGENCY ELF..."
I'M AFRAID I COULDN'T POSSIBLY SUPPORT A
CEREBUS DIDN'T SEE A THING.
OF COURSE YOU DID!
SHE WAS FLYING AROUND THE ROOM LIKE A...
HARUMPH!
I'LL HAVE MY SECRETARY DRAW UP AN APPROPRIATE LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION FOR YOU TO USE AS YOU SEE FIT...
WILL TOMORROW MORNING BE ALL RIGHT?
SURE
GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR CAMPAIGN

NEXT: CAMPAIGN

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Dear Dave
Got to say that Cerebus is one of my favorites. I've enjoyed every issue and volume of "Swords" that has come out so far! I started with # 23 and when I picked up X-Men # 160 last week Well I loved it! Claremont told me that he'd sneak Cerebus in someday, and he finally did! Hope you enjoyed the earth-pig's "guest-star" role! I did! Keep up the great work on Cerebus

Tony Gervasio
1016 S Roosevelt St
Tempe, Arizona 85281

S'ym liked tall purple character S'ym laughed guts out S'ym laughed so hard, S'ym forgot to ask for royalty cheque. Is okay though, because S'ym's royalty cheques for Moon Roach are stuck in mail Blame post office.

When I got this in the mail, I hadn't received X-Men # 160 yet It makes a lot more sense to me now

Dear Dave
After the repeated urgings of a friend of mine I finally discovered Cerebus for myself last week and now I finally see what I've been missing

After the impressive review that TCJ did of you a year or so ago I almost got some issues then but there was just something about a comic about an aardvark I'm not much of a funny animal fan outside of enjoying animated cartoons, plus I burned out real quick on Howard the Duck which Cerebus reminded me of superficially anyway The problem I found with Howard is that after the novelty wore off, and Frank Brunner left, the writing just wasn't interesting enough for me to hold on, plus Gene Colon's art never fluctuated in style or intent from one issue to the next so that everything became one drab blur

Cerebus, on the other hand, noticeably changes from one issue to the next growing layer upon layer, and unlike H the D the cynical humour Steve Gerber wrote pales next to the genuine inventive cynicism you write. I like bitter humour and in Cerebus it sounds genuine I haven't read every issue of Cerebus yet but I have read most of them and it's really outstanding Your art may not be as pretty as Wendy Pini's, but it is extremely good and highly inovative, and I like the writing in Cerebus more than that in Elfquest because there's more depth to it and more experimental on I'm very impressed by what you're doing

James Van Hise
San Diego, CA

Kind words from James Van Hise of that fan institution The Rockets Blast Comic Collector. I remember getting my first copy in the mail (# 79 I believe) in 1970 That's almost five years ago (isn't it?)

Dear Dave and Deni
Your work on Cerebus is very well done I have enjoyed the aardvark's adventures since issue # 14 and you never failed to entertain enlighten, or eek a smile out of me I do have a request, though One of the qualities that attracted me to Cerebus when I first saw the magazine was the wonderful use of slapstick Not in the writing or drawing specifically, but in your thorough storytelling in general The overall appearance and atmosphere of the book seems to have a more sophisticated feel these days Even the more comic moments are utilized purely to underline character (which by-the-way you do very well) The only true slapstick is left to Lord Julius, who you portray flawlessly

As long as you continue to keep your high water-mark standard, you've got me hooked Good Luck

Jim Bertrand
1325 South Fifth, Apt 18
Springfield, Ill 62704

Aren't you glad you wrote this letter? Everyone say thank you to Jim for asking me to put slapstick back in the book when I was starting to write this issue

Dear Dave and Deni
I hope that this letter finds you and your Earth-pig happy, healthy and wealthy or at least two out of three

Cerebus # 37 was humorous enough to ease the memory of Jaka's heartbreak from the preceeding issue You have been refining Cerebus' world for a long enough time and with such care and skill that is is taking on the feel of an existing alternate reality this can be compared with the coherent dimensions Ditko drafted for Doc Deranged er, Strange an awesome feat!

My favorite, I say, most reread issues of Cerebus are (pay attention boy) #s 4 7 & 21 Elrod is charming and one of the few characters that I would not mind meeting in the flesh. The others are Henrot and Jaka

The one upcoming event in Cerebus that I am awaiting most eagerly is the reunion between Cerebus and his pappy, who he has not seen since he was nine. I keep picturing (and hearing) the scene from the Popeye movie where Poopdeck Pappy tries to deny that he sired that Sissypated sniffle snaffle' Could you at least have Cerebus' pop talk like Popeye It would fit with the way you have given distinctive cartoon character accents to the more memorable members of the supporting cast. Cerebus talks like Cerebus 'nuff said. Oops

How about a one-shot 3-D Cerebus? Not a hologram but a holocomic - I think it would work best with a Mind Games story Take care and keep Cerebus in trouble and out of Weedsport

Aardvarks, Albinos and Aliens Comic Shop
8923 North Seneca Street
Weedsport, New York

Oh, he's seen his father since he was nine He's seen his mother too, but that is another story Might make a good holocomic

NOTES

I haven't done a notes section for a while, but a few recurring complaints are going to have to be addressed.

1. *Change the storyline back to Cerebus the Barbarian*

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

No. Simple? This is an alternative comic -- more to the point this is an independent alternative comic which means I make the decisions. Our circulation has doubled since the beginning of "High Society" I am content with that. I get to do what I want and I get to address an audience of close to fifteen thousand people. I find the letters are invaluable in the fine tuning of the book which is why I read every letter that comes in at least twice (when it arrives, when I'm composing the letters page and , the published ones , when I proofread the typesetting) If I changed the storyline as frequently as some are advocating, I would end up with three hundred loosely interwoven episodes. I am attempting a different kind of comic book. Try to think of it as a "what-if" concept. What if the two hundred and some-odd issues of Fantistic Four made sense as a single story?" What if the characters aged (Cerebus turns 29 between this issue and the next, for example) instead of being the same age for twenty years. What if their situations changed from wealthy to poor to wealthy and back -- not as a live issue plot devise, or "addition to the mythos" by a new creator of the legends, but as a realistic goal. "If I'm going to do this thing for thirty years, why keep everything in a set formula for success? My attitude is that you are paying $1.50 a month to watch me break formulas, stretch conventions, and really test the boundries of artistic freedom. We will get back to Cerebus the Barbarian, just as we always get back to Cerebus the Lover. Cerebus the Politician. Cerebus the Bully. Cerebus the Sorcerer's Apprentice. Cerebus the Buffoon. Cerebus the Gambler. Cerebus the Drunkard. A place for everything and everything in it's place, as my mother used to say.

2. I can't help that you are hurting your potential sales by putting in characters people just picking up the book won't know or care about.

We have received letters from people who have started reading issues since High Society began and enjoyed the book right off -- people who don't know who Jaka is, but who still very much enjoyed # 36, and in fact started reading and buying with that issue. If you read an issue of Cerebus and you really find it too confusing to follow, I'd love to hear where I lost you. I'll try to clear up the confusion as best I can. But if you're worried about other people not being able to understand what's going on and that hurting our sales, you shouldn't. Those who become interested become hooked, those who don't become interested tend to buy again later on, and find the occasional issue to their taste, in the meantime, I'm extremely gratified by that.

Tying this in with the first answer. I know the book would propably sell four times as many if I did a five-part "Red Snails" followed by "The Tower of the Green Dumbo" and "Droogs in the House" narrated by Robert Hee Oward, but I couldn't face doing that month in and month out, so why do it?

3. Why do you hate comic book conventions?

Confusion about # 37. The story involved Cerebus at a convention, not me. What if" again. What if Cerebus went to a convention? The upshot of the story was that if you pushed the right buttons, made it clear to him the cause and effect relationship between his job and keeping the strangers happy (and vice versa) he would play along with it. He wishes to maintain a comfortable lifestyle, and he has to do pictures of trees to do it. It's easier than travelling all over Lower Felda trying to sell the Black Blossom Lotus. I am not Cerebus. Deni is not Astoria or the Elf or Jaka. Not in the literal sense of Cerebus being a thinly-veiled autobiography or manifestation of wishful thinking. I like to draw comic books. Cerebus would never sit still long enough to focus on a single concern like that. At this point I prefer less structured forums for meeting fans, but I don't dislike conventions.

by-the-way. Wave to Deni behind the door. Hi, Deni.

WALLY WOOD
WILL EISNER
THE OUTER SPACE SPIRIT
THE COMPLETE COLLECTION • TEXT BY WILL EISNER • PETE HAMILL • CAT YRON WODE • DELUXE PAPERBACK EDITION •
KITCHEN SINK PRESS
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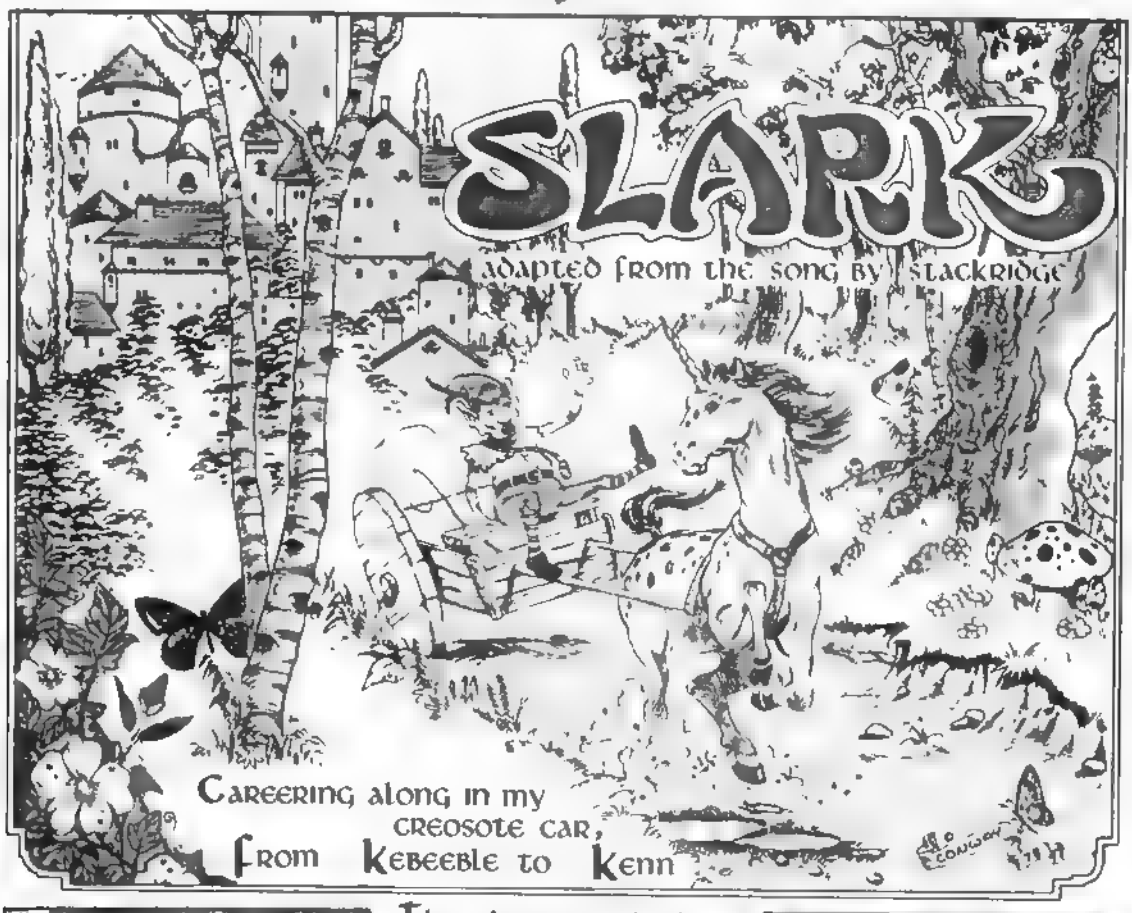
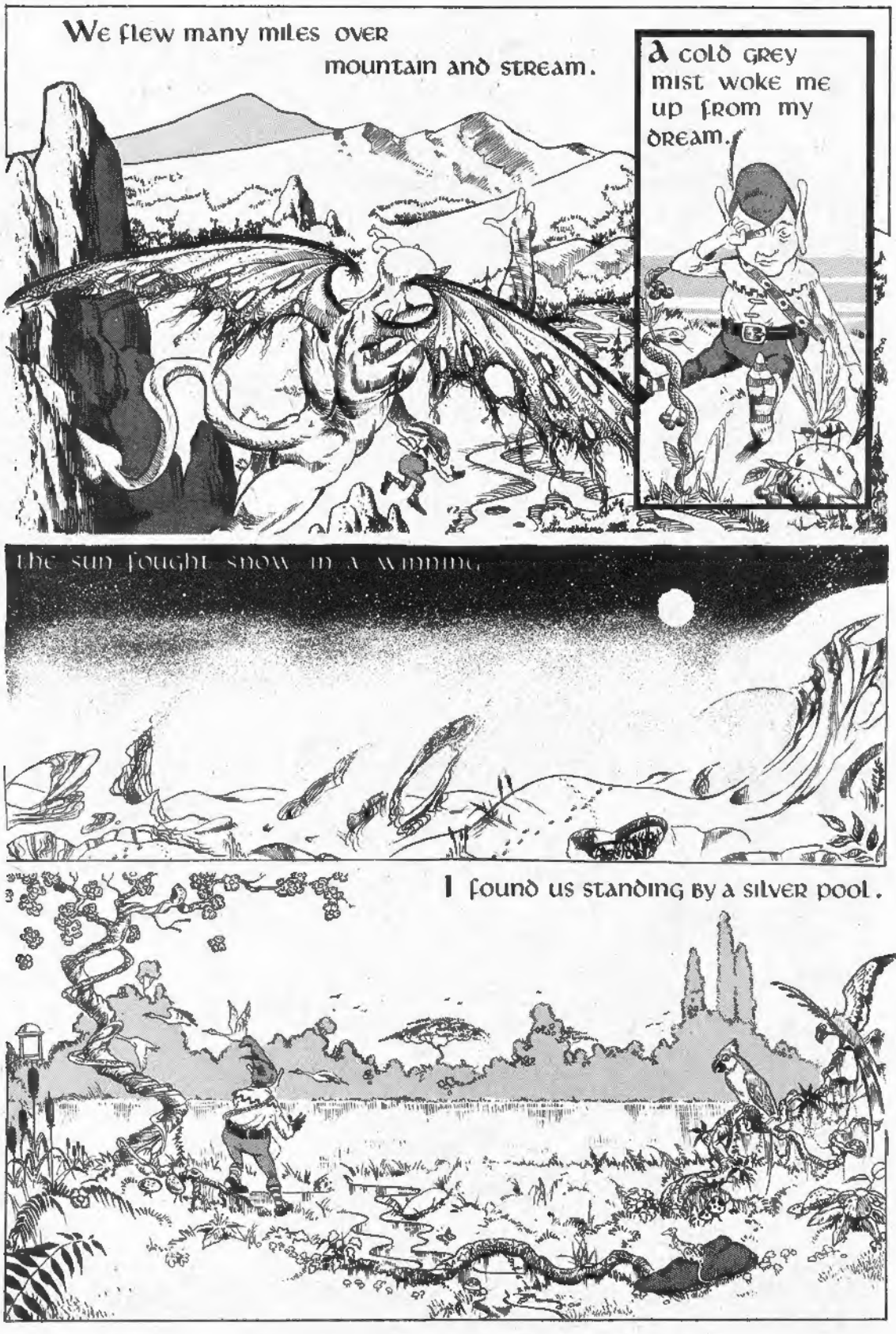

SLARK
adapted from the song by SLACKRIDGE
Careering along in my creosote car,
From Kebeeble to Kenn

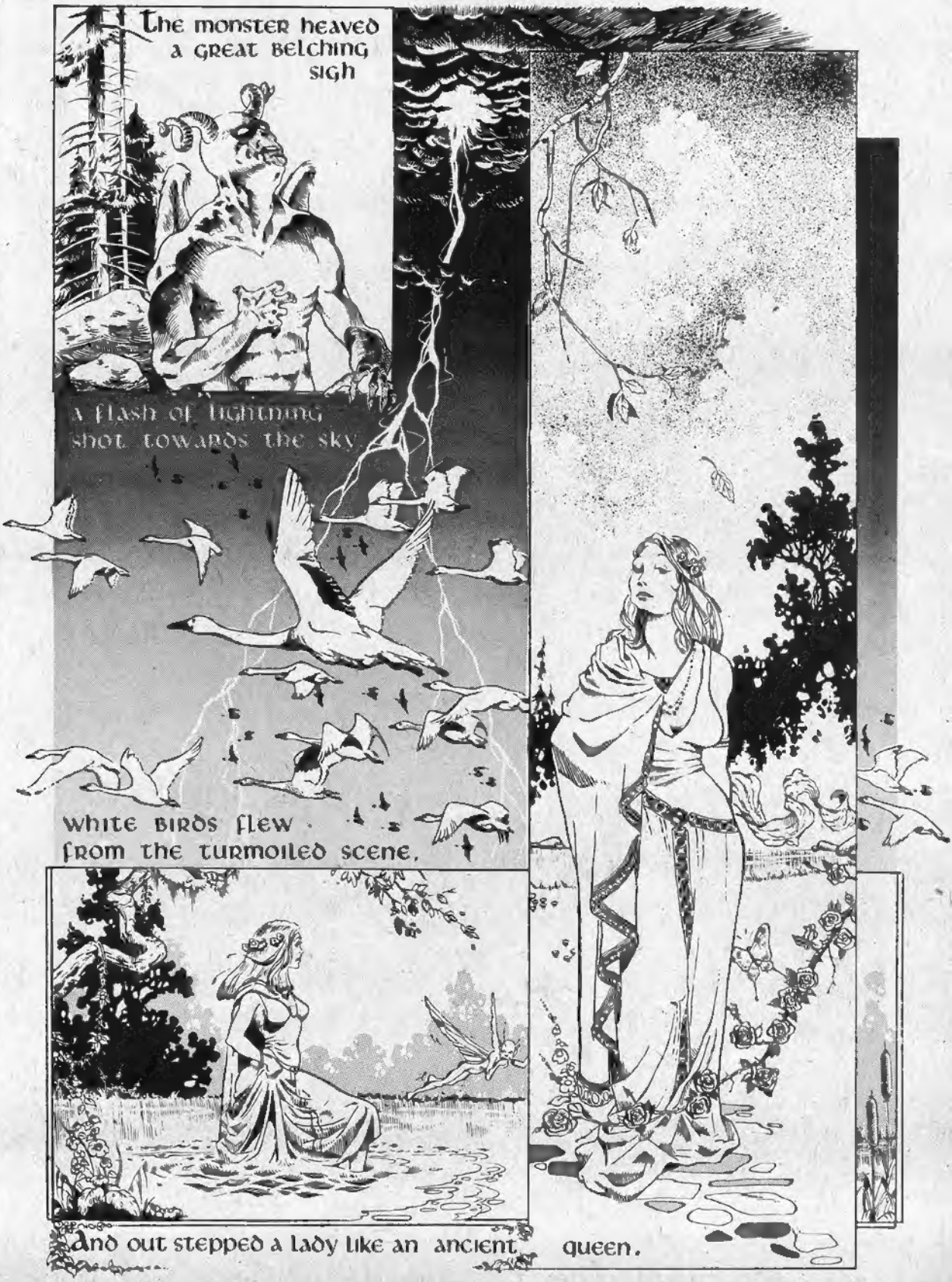
I didn't get very far.
TO BINDU

The sky turned black and a dark cloud grew.

The monster Slark came into view.

I pleaded with Slark to pass me by.
I've done nothing wrong.
I dont want to die.
He scooped me up in his huge grey claws
and bore me away without any cause.


We flew many miles over mountain and stream.
A cold grey mist woke me up from my dream.
the sun fought snow in a winning.
I found us standing by a silver pool.


The monster heaved a great belching sigh
a flash of lightning shot towards the sky
white birds flew from the turmoiled scene.
and out stepped a lady like an ancient queen.

She floated towards the golden sand,
smiled a smile
and took my hand.
She led me away
to the bottom of the lake,
the last magic steps I was ever to take
the end